

REMARKS

Upon entry of the Amendment After Final filed on March 1, 2004, and the amendments presented herein, Claims 106-154 are pending in this Application, with Claims 106, 122, and 140 being independent. In this Preliminary Amendment, Claims 106, 108-109, 112-117, 122, 124-125, 128-130, and 135 have been amended, Claim 134 has been cancelled, and Claims 140-154 have been newly added. All amendments presented herein are made for clarity with respect to the specification and drawings, and not for reasons relating to the statutory requirements for patentability.

Summary of Interview

Applicants undersigned representative would like to thank the Examiner for the productive personal interview conducted on March 24, 2004. The claim amendments presented herein are believed to be in accordance with the understanding reached during that meeting.

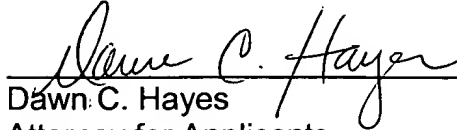
Applicants are in the process of preparing a Declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.132, as discussed at the interview, and expect to file the Declaration shortly. If the Examiner receives this application before the Declaration has been filed, or if anything else is deemed necessary to place this application in condition for allowance, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact the undersigned at the phone number provided below.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that, in view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance, and respectfully request prompt issuance of a notice thereof. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the amendments and arguments presented herein be entered, and that all outstanding rejections be withdrawn.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 625-3549. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address given below.

Respectfully submitted,


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